

**Citation:** Tajammul, M., Rafiq, N., & Fazal, N. (2021). Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Online Teaching amid COVID-19 in Lahore, Pakistan. *Global Language Review*, VI(II), 246-251.  
[https://doi.org/10.31703/blr.2021\(VI-II\).26](https://doi.org/10.31703/blr.2021(VI-II).26)



## Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Online Teaching amid COVID-19 in Lahore, Pakistan

Mohsin Tajammul \*

Nimra Rafiq †

Namra Fazal ‡

### Abstract

*This study aims to explore the perceptions of teachers and learners about online teaching during the pandemic scenario of COVID-19. Allegedly, people complain about poor connectivity, unavailability of machines and inefficiency of computer operating skills. Therefore, there is a need to explore the perceptions of academia and learners about online classes while pandemic lockdown. This study has employed a mixed-method approach in order to get facts and figures as well as the opinion of people regarding the incumbent issue. The explanatory model of mix method approach in which quantitative data and analysis lead to qualitative data. A closed-ended survey was designed to get facts and figures about perceptions of learners regarding online learning. A Snowball sampling technique, a kind of purposive sampling has been adopted. Quantitative data was collected from seventy undergraduate students through Google survey form and statistical analysis of data was done. Perceptions of teachers were gathered through an interview protocol designed to collect the opinion of teachers. It has been found that online classes are not effective without professional training and the provision of internet connection and gadgets at cheap rates. There is a need to equip students and teachers with IT surfing and operational skills for the digitalization of education.*

**Key Words:** COVID-19, Online Teaching, Perceptions, Lockdown

### Introduction

The magnanimity of information technology's influence on multiple aspects of our lives today cannot be refuted, nor can its growing popularity and use in the education sector be denied ([Abbasi et. al, 2020](#)). With the emergence of globalization, the increased interconnectivity has opened the doors for online education but it has been revolutionized with the breakdown of the pandemic, allegedly started from Wuhan city of China, named as COVID 19 around the globe. The significance and usefulness of

the application of E-learning has remained the basis for many studies. Many universities worldwide encourage it as a means of teaching, and it is widely accepted by students. There are various reasons for its overall acceptability; few of them, particularly if students are easy to use, more versatile and more environmentally friendly. Despite its many advantages, however, e-learning constraints such as social isolation, lack of interaction between students

\* MS Scholar Applied Linguistic, Department of Sciences and Humanities, FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

† MS Scholar Applied Linguistic, Department of Sciences and Humanities, FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ MS Scholar Applied Linguistic, Department of Sciences and Humanities, FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

and instructor communication problems, etc., are not present.

The COVID-19 put schools around the world to a close. Over 1.2 billion students are out of the classroom ([Batool,2021](#)). Training has also significantly changed with the distinguishing rise in e-learning, which includes teaching on digital platforms (World Economic Forum). Various locations and applications, for example Udemy, can be accessed to achieve that goal. It is an online support that offers an enormous range of courses, from web development to personal development. There are some applications that are providing this assistance like, Lynda, Khan Academy, TED, Lumosity, Goodreads, Duolingo, StudyBlue, Google classroom, Zoom application, Slate, Moodle and Google Meet.

Stakeholders, including institutional administrators, teachers, students, etc. make considerable efforts to optimally use the technology available to continue education and to minimize the gaps resulting from current events. Shortly after the announcement of a transition from formal classes to online classes, concerns arose as to whether the network and equipment available to students and academics in Pakistan were available. The Higher Education Committee (HEC) was officially obliged to digitize our obsolete educational system in the face of a pandemic, which recognized that there is no digital infrastructure.

For a country in which hundreds of teachers do not even know lesson plans and credit times, it has not been pleasant for teachers or students to transfer to a digital world. It meant that not only would teachers need to take a step forward to set up a framework for diffusion but they also need to become acquainted with the modern (digital) world (Batool, 2020).

Considering the relatively recent development of this method of teaching in Pakistan, the new system continues to be learned by teachers and students. It would be interesting to explore whether or not students are adapted to a new methodology or prefer to revert back to conventional learning ([Abbasi,et al 2020](#)). It is important at this time to learn the perspectives and points of view of the

students and teachers about this virtual teaching and learning approach.

### **Problem Statement**

There is a sudden shift from traditional education to online education due to COVID-19. Higher education has compelled universities and students to digitalize the mode of education without developing the infrastructure and providing equipment ([Batool, 2020](#)). Therefore, It is important to know whether the teachers and the students are mentally prepared for it or not.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study has been conducted to get the statistics and perceptions of learners and teachers on the sudden shift of formal education to online education.

### **Research Question**

What are the perceptions and statistics of teachers and learners regarding the sudden shift to online education amidst the COVID-19 situation?

### **Literature Review**

In the world of computers, tablets, laptops and mobile phones, the online study has brought a tremendous change.

Experience, technology familiarity, social interaction and presence, all factors play an important role in the perception of students to online courses, except in terms of information technology background.

Several studies have shown that active involvement of students in the learning process enhances performance, a phenomenon also called active learning. Learning theory indicates that learning is facilitated by active participation in the study, research that represents real-life contexts and experiences and practical and reflective activities that facilitate critical thinking or deep learning ([Bransford et al. 2000](#)).

On the other hand, while learning face to face, the instruction can provide faculty members and students with immediate feedback on the lesson, delivery and experience. Observing the body language and non-verbal signals of a student helps teachers to quickly adapt or refine the answer for the students and offer a more comprehensive insight into the knowledge needed. Instead, staff members and

students must rely more on the written response or reviews of tasks, meetings, or direct questions.

[Mislinawati and Nurmasyitah \(2018\)](#) demonstrate the e-learning curriculum to enhance comprehension, flexibility, auto discipline, encouragement to learn, and interactions with the teacher. This module provides students with a clear comprehension of the advantages of E-learning shows that e-learning is a revolutionary concept for the majority of students but few issues have been identified, such as fear of discrimination by employers against those who study e-learning.

The pandemic of COVID-19 has greatly influenced the worldwide learning environment. It forced the closing of educational institutes, which affected over 90% of the student population worldwide. Because during this unusual phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, face to face learning methods were no longer suitable, and this situation caused students to immerse themselves in E-learning during this period of COVID-19 Lockdown. Our education system has used the online form of learning, which is an incomplete but fast solution to the crises, to continue teaching and learning in education establishments.

COVID situation has helped us understand that online training is important to our postgraduate students. In accordance with previous researches, students' satisfaction with online learning was similar. Apart from the knowledge gain, this study has shown how online learning affects our students' morality by distracting them from the pandemic situation that exists. It can be stated that online teaching is feasible, cheap and should be included beyond the prevalent lockdown in Pakistan.

The pandemic of the COVID-19 definitely offers learners their own understanding of online learning. The value of student awareness is known to contribute to the success of this online learning process by teachers and institutions, to manage it optimally and to ensure that COVID-19 is widely distributed. The aim of this research is, therefore, in the sense of a COVID-19 pandemic, to examine the understanding and perceptions of students and learners about online learning.

## Methodology

This study has employed a mixed-method approach to research in which both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are utilized to get better results and to study the change of shift of one method to another. This research is an explanatory mixed-method design in which the method of quantitative research leads to qualitative research. Therefore, in the quantitative portion of research a survey containing ten closed-ended questions was designed to collect data regarding perceptions of students about the shift of face to face education to online education. Random sampling was done as per the availability of students. The validity of the research tool was checked through a pilot study. The scale was based on a 5-point Likert scale: 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- Somewhat agree 4-agree, 5- strongly agree. In order to analyze the quantitative data software, SPSS has been employed.

In a qualitative piece of exploration so as to gather the perceptions of the teachers, interviews were conducted through semi-structured interview protocol. The snowball sampling technique was used to collect data from interview protocols. Snowball technique would be useful in Pandemic as it allows the chain referral method in which we contact one person and that person will help us to get in contact with another person for the collection of data. Hence this series of references becomes a chain of contact. ([Pope & Mays 2000](#)).

The information gathered through voice records of twenty college instructors was interpreted with the help of Braun and Clarke's six stages of thematic analysis i.e. : Step 1: Become familiar with the data, Step 2: Generate initial codes, Step 3: Search for themes, Step 4: Review themes, Step 5: Define themes, Step 6: Write-up. To validate the information of interviews verbatims, quotes from interviews of participants have been added. (Johnson, 2015).

## Data Analysis

### Quantitative Analysis

A total of 70 students had participated in conduction of the study by submitting an online Google form. They were all students of under-graduation from different universities of Lahore ie: University of Lahore, University of management and technology,

University of Central Punjab, Riphah International and Fast NUCES Lahore. The results of the survey questionnaire have been shown in table 1 underneath. The answers of students were analysed

through SPSS software of statistical analysis. The number of students who have accepted the change of shift of education to online classes was twenty out of seventy.

**Table 1.** Overall Perception and Category Wise Responses of Students Towards E-learning N= 70

Responses	N (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	p-value
Overall perception	Positive response	20(28 %)	3.555%	0.1086	0.015
	Negative response	50(71%)			
Future learning preference	Positive response	10(14 %)	2.2455%	0.2456	0.254
	Negative response	60(81%)			
E-teaching is better than traditional teaching	Positive response	25(35 %)	4.5673%	0.3455	0.345
	Negative response	45(64.5%)			
Quality of e-teaching is satisfactory	Positive response	20(28 %)	3.4554	0.1456	1.345
	Negative response	50(71%)			
The impact of e-learning is less	Positive response	60(85 %)	6.777	2.0988	0.456
	Negative response	10(0.14%)			
Lack of effective learning	Positive response	45(64 %)	7.224	1.9876	2.456
	Negative response	25(35%)			
Lack of interaction	Positive response	20(28 %)	6.565	0.1876	0.564
	Negative response	50(71%)			

60% of participants have responded that online teaching has no future in the upcoming days whereas 45% of the students consider traditional, face to face teaching of better than online teaching. Participants believed that the quality of e-teaching is not satisfactory. 50 % of students considered online learning to lack interaction.

### Qualitative Analysis

Teachers are of mixed views with respect to the shift of formal classes to online classes. The teachers who are equipped with computer operating skills are of the view that online classes are good and it is easy to work from home. However, the majority of the teachers are not comfortable, particularly old age teachers who are not complacent with the usage of information technology. They opined that there should be proper training to use online teaching applications such as ZOOM, Moodle etc. Following are a few themes identified from Codification using Braun & Clarke Method of thematic analysis.

### Utility of Online Teaching

Teachers have the opinion that this online shift is Useful because it is leading nations towards a digital

revolution. *“It is not our personal choice now,”* said a participant. Everyone has been compelled to learn computer operating and browsing skills, which is mandatory in this era of technological advancement. Few participants have the opinion that it is time-saving and easy. It has cut the long travelling hours and helps us in getting rid of traffic jams. A participant replied that it is bringing a revolution in the education system and helping us to save our environment. In this surge of population explosion and air pollution; this shift to online classes will help to clean the environment. He also referred to the air quality index of Lahore that it was improving. He emphasized that if we can do something from home then *“what is the need to waste time and energy on travelling to institute?”*

### Problems of Online Teaching

It has been known through interviews that the major problem while this shift to online education is infrastructure and availability of technological gadgets. One of the teachers said, *“We are not digital natives”* therefore there are less amount of people who have adopted technology in their lives. It is all right as far as the usage of smartphones is concerned but browsing and developing lectures either using

Microsoft office or any other application is really an exhausting and time-consuming activity for beginners. There should be proper training and workshops for teachers to master the art of online teaching. A participant emphasized that online teaching can never take the place of traditional teaching as teachers cannot observe the presence of every student at the time of delivering the lecture. This process has given birth to ghost students. Furthermore, online teaching lacks interaction as compared to formal classes where modern methodologies of teaching demand learner-centered teaching methods and the role of the teacher should be as a facilitator.

### Assessment and Evaluation

Major Problem teachers have confronted while teaching online during this COVID-19 scenario is in the assessment and evaluation of students to grade them for promotion in the next semester. However, formal assessment at the end of class is also a tough task to manage for students and teachers as well. If a teacher has to conduct four to five lectures on a daily basis then he has to work the whole day and night to prepare lectures, material and quizzes to assess the performance of students. A participant commented that there is a need to formulate efficient strategies for the evaluation of students in the given time.

### Future of Online Teaching

Teachers are of the opinion that if COVID-19 prolongs then there will be a remarkable shift of online teaching from traditional teaching. However, in their current experience teachers are not happy with their schedules, as it has become very hectic and depressing. As one participant commented that, *“teaching is now a full-time job”*. Nevertheless, teachers think that the upcoming age is the age of the digital world, and online teaching would establish its scope by hook and crook. A participant said, *“Those who will adopt it; they will cope with the given*

*circumstances of the world and those who ignore it, will have to bear the loss. As time and tide waits for none”*.

### Solutions to Online Teaching

On asking an interviewee responded about solutions to incumbent issues of online teaching that policy-makers and government need to focus on two things. Firstly, they should develop and provide the digital infrastructure that every individual can have easy access to; secondly, teacher-training workshops should be held to train teachers for efficient use of technology so that they can transfer their skills among their pupils. One participant informed that few private training institutes are providing short booklets of modules to use online teaching applications with pictorial demonstration. However, few videos are also present on YouTube to learn the skill of presenting online classes.

### Conclusion

Online teaching has been adopted to save time in this pandemic situation worldwide. Learners and teachers have mixed views about the utility and efficiency of online teaching. Results of this research have shown that students have quite a pessimistic view about online classes. The majority of students have not accepted this shift from a face-to-face to an online classroom interaction. Nevertheless, few students of remote areas have serious issues of availability of devices and access to networks and therefore, they are facing issues of connectivity to take a class without distortion. Similarly, teachers have not accepted this shift wholeheartedly. They have their own reservations with respect to increase in working hours, workload and managerial issues. However, teachers considered that online teaching would have huge scope and future. They took the change positively and put their best to cope with the current situation to keep the torch of light of education to illuminate the world.

## References

- Abbasi, S., Ayoob, T., Malik, A., & Memon, S. I. (2020). Perceptions of students regarding E-learning during Covid-19 at a private medical college. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, 36(COVID19-S4).  
<https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.36.covid19-s4.2766>
- Batool, F. (2020). *A hypo-digital interim solution?*. The News.
- Batool, F. (2021). *Learning online*. The News.  
<https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/778136-learnin>
- Benek-Rivera, J., & Mathews, V. E. (2004). Active Learning with Jeopardy: Students Ask the Questions——. *Journal of Management Education*, 28(1), 104–118.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1052562903252637>
- Bonwell, C. C., & Eisen, J. A. (1991). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom* (ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1). Washington, DC: George Washington University.
- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind experience, and school committee on developments in the science of learning*. Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education of the National Research Council, National Academy Press.
- Driscoll, M. (2002). *How people learn (and what technology might have to do with it)*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology Syracuse, NY.  
<http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-3/learn.htm>
- Johnston, J., Killion, J., & Oomen, J. (2005). Student Satisfaction in the Virtual Classroom. *Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*.  
<https://doi.org/10.46743/1540-580x/2005.1071>
- Jhonson, R. (2015). Examining the Validity Structure of Qualitative Research. Research gate. 118(2),  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/246126534>
- Mislinawati, V. M., & Nurmasiyah. (2018). Students' perceptions on the implementation of e-learning: Helpful or unhelpful? Paper presented at the 6th South East Asia Design Research International Conference.
- Pallof, R., & Pratt, K. (2003). *The Virtual Student: A Profile and Guide to Working with Online Learners*. San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass Publishers.
- Pope, C., & Mays, N. (2000). *Qualitative Research in Health Care*. London: BMJ Books,
- Sarason, Y., & Banbury, C. (2004). Active learning facilitated by using a game-show format or who doesn't. *Journal of Management Education*; 28(4), 509-518.